

Goodbye, Mike by lovelysarcastic

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Summary:

Mike Wheeler still has nightmares.

Goodbye, Mike

Author's Note:

I don't even know what this one-shot is. I just started writing it before season 2 came out and now I found it laying around in my computer, so I decided to finish writing it.

If there are any grammar mistakes, I'M SORRY.

(I swear I'm working on the last chapter of 'I'm not in love').

“Goodbye, Mike.”

Mike Wheeler’s eyes went wide-opened as he emerged from the usual nightmare. His heart was beating fast, his breathing was caught in his throat, making it harder for him to breathe, and his body was covered in sweat. His vision was temporarily dizzy. He tried to look around, get used to the darkness of the room before standing up and going to the bathroom.

He took one look at himself, at the dark circles under his eyes, and sighed. He leaned down to the sink and washed his face with cold water. Halfway through it, he realized it was better to just take a complete shower.

He spent a few minutes under the water, allowing the warm drops of water to attack his face, to relax his body, to clean his mind from any memories. His breathing was better. He didn’t feel as awful as a few minutes ago. He didn’t feel like his world had just ended.

It was just a nightmare, man. Just a nightmare. The usual one, but... *it isn’t real*. Not anymore.

Yet, Mike couldn’t help himself but dream about it. It didn’t matter that ten years had gone by since that night. It didn’t matter that he was now a twenty-two-year-old man who was fresh out of college

and already with job offers in well-known publisher houses as a book editor. It didn't matter that he wasn't in Hawkins anymore, or that, against all odds, he was able to keep his best friends close to him. Lucas was a cop, Dustin was still working through his engineering masters and Will was preparing his first painting exhibition in Boston. They were okay. They were fine.

Mike got out of the shower, grabbed a white towel and cleaned himself up before putting his pyjamas – an old pair of shorts and a Star Wars t-shirt – on again. He left the bathroom's door opened behind him so that the hot steam from the shower could dissipate faster. He walked to the small kitchen of his one-bedroom flat, his mind set on grabbing something to drink from the fridge, but there wasn't anything he felt like drinking, so he opened the freezer and took out the ice-cream he had bought last week. Half of it had already been eaten, but it was okay. He grabbed a spoon and went to sit on the sofa.

Mike didn't turn the TV on. He didn't feel like watching anything at the moment, or even feel the bright light of the TV burning his eyes. After all, it was three am in the morning.

The nightmare that had haunted him tonight was one that, once in a while, liked to pay him a visit. It didn't have any stream of coherency in it, being only flashbacks from that terrible night in 1983. He always woke up when hearing her say those two words.

Mike couldn't say goodbye anymore. He refused to use the word and people who knew him well enough tried to avoid using it around him. It was taunted. That was something possibly normal, right? Having a word traumatizing you so bad that, at a certain stage of your teenager years, you almost had panic attacks when hearing it? That first year had been awful, and the ones that followed weren't what he could consider 'good' in any way, but, at least, after 1984, he had something to hold on to.

“A nightmare?”

Mike looked up from the cold ice-cream box. She was wearing one of his t-shirts. In summer, they always slept in his old clothes. Her legs almost shone against the fair light that the street lamps provided

through the living-room's window. Her curly brown hair was a mess as she had been sleeping peacefully until now, and, if there was any way for him to see her face, he was sure he would see how red and puffy her eyes were from being awoken out of the blue. She hadn't expected to wake up at three am, having gone to bed just two hours ago.

But Mike never knew when the nightmare hit him.

Like she didn't know when her nightmares hit her.

"Yes."

Eleven approached him in a quiet pace. She took the empty seat next to him on the sofa, pulling her legs under her body, and laid her head on his shoulder.

They remained in a comfortable silence. Mike put down the ice-cream box on the sofa, forgetting that it would probably leave a wet spot on it, and used his free hands to grab his girlfriend's. It wasn't like he wanted Eleven to comfort him, to whisper him nice words and promises, because, believe him, they had been that road once or twice and it didn't end well.

They were both fucked-up, she more than he, of course, but still. Mike couldn't deal with the lost he had faced at the age of twelve. Eleven couldn't deal with *literally everything* she had to put up with (fight, even) when they were younger. What she had gone through? It would probably break most people, but here she was, keeping him company at three in the morning because he was the one that had a bad dream.

He didn't even deserve to have this kind of nightmares, not when his girlfriend went through what she had gone through, not when even one of his best friends had had it worse than him.

Then, why did his subconscious remind him of that night, of what he had felt when he was so sure he had lost Eleven for good? Hell, he hadn't even been the only one missing her. Dustin and Lucas, they had felt it too. They had missed her too despite not once saying it out loud during the year she had gone missing.

But Mike was weak. Why was he weak?

"I wish I could be more than okay," he found himself saying.

"Mike," Eleven sighed. "You are more than okay."

"But..." He went quiet, too afraid to say those words out loud.

But he couldn't give her normality. He couldn't be there for her, for her struggles and nightmares, when he stupidly had his own set of nightmares, of fears. Fears that he shouldn't have. Because he had watched Eleven come back to him. His sister, Nancy, she never got to watch her best friend come back to her.

They used to be there for each other, the Wheeler siblings, but then Eleven came back, showed up in the right moment to save them from the demodogs, like Dustin had called them, and everything had changed. For a while there, Nancy had really believed that Barb would be back too. At first, she was vigorous in fixing things up, in making everything go back to normal so that they could welcome Barb back home again... But then, as days went by, she lost hope all over again. She used to lock herself in the bathroom crying. Eleven came back, but Barb didn't. And there were issues they had to deal with: Will had gone through hell once again; there was still something threatening to kill everyone in Hawkins, something worse than the Demogorgon; and Eleven clearly had been through a lot and wasn't talking about it, wanting to save everyone instead of focusing on getting better.

A squeeze on his hand and her soft voice calling for him woke Mike up from his thoughts.

Mike looked down at Eleven. She was staring at him with her big, round brown eyes filled with worry and sadness. She didn't like it when he was like this.

He wasn't good for her. Everyone said *hell, Mike, of course you are, you waited for her, you loved her through all*. And that had been enough in the past to cheer him up because, yeah, that had always been an issue for Mike, the fact that maybe he wasn't good enough for her. However, things had changed. She needed a normal life now. She

needed to focus on what she was doing now: taking a degree on Speech Therapy, learning how to drive, drawing as a way of relaxing, baking as a way of spending the time, reading everything she got her hands on, and finding out who she was.

“Please, don’t do that,” she asked in a weak tone of voice.

Mike blinked.

“Do what?”

“Have those thoughts.”

Sometimes Mike wondered if reading minds – particularly his – was part of her powers.

“Sorry.”

Out of the blue, Eleven pushed her body away from him, but only for a second, as she moved to straddle Mike, sitting on his lap, one leg on each side of him, face to face. Mike stared at her confused until her lips met his in a gentle kiss. His hand moved to find her naked legs and he caressed her soft skin.

When Eleven pulled back, letting her hands stay on Mike’s face, her thumbs stroking his cheekbones, she said, “We never apologized for being who we are, right?”

Mike blinked. That was something he had said to her years ago, when everything had calmed down, when Will had got better, and Hawkins was safe. She had been in distraught, crying because what was her point now that everyone was safe? And then she had said she was sorry, sorry that she couldn’t be someone normal, someone who couldn’t deal with peace. And Mike had comforted her. *It’s alright, El, we shouldn’t apologize for being who we are.*

“I’m scared,” he confessed.

Eleven leaned closer, resting her arms on his shoulders, her nose touching his.

“Of what?”

"Of losing you," he answered. "And... yet, I'm- I feel selfish because I don't think I should have you in my life, El. At least, not like this."

He shouldn't know her like this. He shouldn't know how innocent and cute she looked in the mornings when she first woke up. He shouldn't know how she liked taking showers in extremely hot water. He shouldn't know how she looked like with no clothes on. Or how she moaned whenever he kissed her collarbone. Because those things belonged to someone that *could give her normality*. Someone who wouldn't wake up in the middle of night with stupid, irrational nightmares.

"Are you breaking up with me, Mike Wheeler?"

Mike stared at her wide-eyed.

"I-"

"That would be stupid," Eleven continued, pulling away and sitting comfortably on his lap. Her hands moved from his hair to his chest. "I promised Nancy a lot of things that I never shared with you because... well, you don't break promises, right?" Mike nodded, understanding. "But... I think there is one thing you should know... After you asked me to be your girlfriend, I called Nancy and told her the news."

"But... I told her the news," Mike said. He clearly remembered how excited Nancy had sounded on the phone when he told her that *finally* he had done it. He had asked Eleven out.

"Yeah, because I made her promise not to tell you," his girlfriend admitted with a tiny, cheeky smile.

Mike blinked, surprised.

"But that isn't the point right now," Eleven continued. "The point is... Nancy told me to take care of you because... you were so deep into wanting to take care of me that you would lose yourself in that... And that would be bad."

Mike opened his mouth to argue, but Eleven silenced him with her finger against his lips.

“I never wanted to be something bad in your life,” she continued. “I wanted to be good for you. So, I promised Nancy that I would be here to stop you from being stupid. Or from doing something stupid.”

Mike breathed out a sort of low laugh.

“Is that why you don’t let me ride a motorcycle?” He asked, trying to break the tension.

Eleven smiled, giggling a bit.

“Yes. You would drive against a wall and you know it.”

Mike chuckled softly. He lifted one of his hands and touched his girlfriend’s curly hair.

“I’m too selfish, El,” he said.

Eleven raised an eyebrow confused.

“To break up with you,” Mike explained. “I’ve had you for almost ten years now. I can’t just give you up.”

“Good,” Eleven remarked.

“Good?” Mike sounded surprised.

Eleven leaned in and found a spot to lay her head on his shoulder.

“Yes. Because I’m too selfish to give you up too.”

Author’s Note:

Tell me what you think, though?